(c) To promote trade and Investments joint trade committee meetings are held on regular basis and issues of bilateral interests are discussed to facilitate trade and investment. Export Promotion Councils are encouraged to participate regularly in exhibitions/fairs etc. They also organise buyer-sellers' meets. EXIM Policy is also suitably modified with focus on export growth.

[Translation]

Agricultural Export

536. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of schemes for the promotion of agricultural export under the export import policy;

(b) whether the number of farmers amongst the exporters are negligible;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether there is any proposal to attract the interest of farmer in export; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) A number of policy changes have been introduced to make agricultural exports more viable. Lowering of import duties on capital goods particularly for greenhouse equipment and plant and machinery necessary for food processing industries has favoured agricultural exports. Most of the restrictions on agricultural exports have been removed. Only two items in the category of agricultural and food products are in the negative list i.e. beef and tallow. The items on the restricted list have been drastically pruned and very few items now remain subject to either licensing or quantitative ceiling.

The Export Policy is constantly being updated and further liberalised. Recent changes introduced include:-

1. Export of sugar has been decanalised.

2. Zero duty in case CIF value is Rs. 5 crores or more for agriculture, acqueculture, animal husbandry, floriculture, horticulture, pisciculture, viticulture, poultry and sericulture with export obligation of 6 times CIF value of CG on FOB basis or 5 times CIF value of CG on NFE basis with export obligation to be met in 6 years.

3. Permitting 50% of the production to be sold in Domestic Tariff Area.

4. Entitlement of Special Import Licence (SIL):

— 2% additional SIL for export of products manufactured by units registered as SSI provided export of these items is more than 50% of the export during that period.

— 1% additional SIL for export of fruits, vegetables, floriculture and horticulture products provided export of these items is more than 10% of the export during that period.

- 1% additional SIL for export of products manufactured in the North East provided export of these items is more than 10% of the export during the period.

(b) to (e) No separate data is maintained for the farmers registered as exporters. However, to encourage farmers to participate in the export efforts, the Commodity Boards and the Export Promotion Councils are periodically advised to give vide publicity to the export promotion efforts of the Government.

Poor Performance Over Recovery

537. SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV:

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Finance Minister called a review meeting during the month of May, 1997 to tackle with the problems of the past dues, a large chunk of which is owed by the corporates and the businessmen;

(b) whether the Finance Minister has also taken up the issue of Banks' poor performance over recovery of non-performing assets;

(c) if so, the details of the review meeting; and

(d) whether a memorandum was submitted to Finance Ministry by the Directors attached to the UCO Bank, Central Bank and other banks urging them to intervene in the debt recovery process?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (c) Finance Minister had a meeting on 21.5.97 regarding functioning of Debts Recovery Tribunals (DRTs) and their outstanding issues so that recovery of dues in respect of suits filed by the Banks can be expedited. Performance formance of individual Banks in recovery of dues was not the subject of this meeting.

(d) No, Sir.

Internal Audit System

538. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of times the RBI and the internal auditors of the banks inspected private and public sector banks during the last three years and the outcome of such inspections, bank-wise/branch-wise alongwith findings thereof;

(b) the action taken on the findings of/the RBI and the internal auditors; and

(c) the reasons for the bunglings/frauds which continue to take place in the banks in spite of the regular inspections/visits of the banks?